

notion that iron must be pretty plentiful in Bristol: but as the building is unfinished completion might be premature. Mr. Pope is the architect, and Wilcox the builder.—Considerable additions are being made at the Infirmary.—Scaffolding is being put up for the restoration of the noted north porch of Redcliffe Church, under Mr. G. Godwin, architect, at the cost of a munificent anonymous correspondent, who signs himself *Nil Desperandum*. The occurrence has so much mystery and romance about it that we may on another occasion go into particulars, and we will then give an engraving of this magnificent specimen of the Decorated style as it will appear when restored.

THE GAS MOVEMENT.

GAS CONSUMERS—'LARGE' & 'SMALL'—STRONG & WEAK AND DISUNITED.
Matter of serious import.

ON more than one occasion we have threatened the general exposure of an iniquity on the part of Gas Companies, and even also, as we shall now show, on the part of Corporations, and public and other associations, in connivance with them, towards the great mass of what are classed by these as 'private' consumers, contradistinct from 'public,' and 'small' consumers, contradistinct from 'large.'

The iniquity under consideration is so gross as to be scarcely credible. On a recent occasion, we characterised a difference of 1s. 6d. on 5s. per 1,000 cubic feet of charge made by the Rugby Company between their contracts with the London and North-Western Railway Company at 5s. per 1,000, and their 'private consumers' at 7s. 6d. per 1,000, as a shameful one, but such a difference shrinks into the modesty of scarcely visible dimensions, when contrasted with a host of others. What will our readers think of a frequent exaction of 30, 40, and 50 per cent. from the great mass of 'small' or 'private' consumers, beyond the rate charged to large or influential associations, companies, or corporations, who might otherwise make their own gas? Nay, of the not unfrequent exaction of several hundreds per cent. beyond municipal corporation prices?

Not to dwell upon mere abstractions however, let us consult the records of the gas companies' own confessional,—ever holding in remembrance, that since there is no fear of their being 'too truthful,' or 'revealing too much' in their own estimation, we can scarcely satisfy ourselves that we have even then fathomed the deepest depths of this mystery of iniquity. Yet out of their own mouths we shall superabundantly condemn them, else we are indeed mistaken.

And first let us square accounts between the 'large' consumer and the 'small,'—ever keeping in view that, in the aggregate, the 'small' are in truth the large, and the 'large' the small; and as for any thing like excuse or justification on the ground of additional risk, or additional expense in distribution of gas or in collection of proceeds, we shall only say, that if the gas companies are able to sell—with a sufficient profit is a matter of course if *ABLE* to sell—at prices 30, 40, 50, or 100 per cent. below those comparatively enormous charges exacted piecemeal and at will from the great but *unfortunately* not associated mass of 'small' or 'private' consumers, it must indeed demand the swallow of the most voracious and indiscriminate gullibility even to nominate for a single instant on the defence, pretence, or whatever we may call it, that additional risk or increased expense give anything but the most sidelong and sinister countenance to so iniquitous an overcharge on the disinherited mass of the gas-consuming public; even though it were not the self-condemnatory fact that many of the companies do not consider themselves entitled to exact a single farthing from small consumers on account of any such expense or risk: good reason why they should not too, considering that, as to risk amongst the small consumers, every individual rogue or other defaulter on the 'large' scale is equivalent to and must absorb the defalcations of a multitude of the small; and that as to expense of distribution and collection, these, in fact, constitute almost the only outlay at all, which

renders gas a thing of any cost to either large or small; and though they may entitle companies to charge something like a moderate average price from all, whether near their works or not, do by no means entitle any of them to come it over the small and unprotected in particular with so strong a double dose of cost and extras as so many of them do, even in the somewhat more conscientious face of their fellows who have never dreamt, or have now repented, of doing so, or who have pitched their exactions at a much more moderate rate which almost equally condemns the enormity to which this unprincipled and inconsistent system of wholesale plunder occasionally mounts.

At Birmingham, the last price to large consumers, recorded in the Parliamentary abstract, was 3s. 9d. per 1,000 cubic feet, with 10 per cent. discount; while from 4s. 6d. up to 6s. 8d. were exacted from small consumers, and especially from those who paid quarterly in place of only annually.

At Bristol the rate of charge was 6s., with discounts rising from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 20 per cent., according to the quantity consumed by one individual or establishment.

At Bury it was 7s. 6d., 'subject to discounts, varying, according to consumption, from $2\frac{1}{2}$ up to 30 per cent., and discount also allowed for prompt payment.' What a lingering love is here displayed for even the shadow of a higher price when the substance has vanished! What a tempting *superfutation*, too, of discount on the back of discount!

At Derby, discounts have ranged from 10 up to 40, 45, and even 50 per cent., according to the quantity consumed by one 'large' paymaster: that is, the multitude of unassociated shopkeeping neighbours, making up one contiguous, though disunited aggregate of large consumption, taken piecemeal, have been made to pay 6s. 6d. per 1,000 feet overhead, while the fortunate and powerful single holder, or company of holders, of a range of mills or factories, capable of being provoked into erecting gas works of their own, have been only charged somewhere about 3s. 6d., or little more than one half!

At Halifax, the sliding scale of discounts mounts up from $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on 6s. for the poor and helpless devils, to 50 per cent. for the rich and able, who therefore enjoy their gas light at the rate of 3s. per 1,000 in place of 6s.

At Kidderminster, the price to the few large consumers is 6s., while 10s. are exacted from the many small.

At Leeds, the bonus offered to the large consumer is 25 per cent. discount; the bone thrown to the mere 'small' consuming dog, but $2\frac{1}{2}$.

At Newcastle, as if to shew that coals at least are guiltless of the imposition, 20 per cent. on 4s. 6d. are presented to the great, but only 10 to the small.

At Over Darwen the company's profitable price has long been 4s. 6d. to the great, while they have come over the small to the tune of 8s. 6d., which shame has at length diminished into 7s. 6d.

At Rochdale, the reduction of the nominal price is 15 per cent. to the large consumers, 5 to the smaller, none at all to the small. At Stalybridge it is 30 to the large, $2\frac{1}{2}$ to the smaller, and none to the small.

At Wakefield the wholesale price is 3s., the retail, 5s.

At Warrington, the discounts fall from 46 per cent. to 4. At Wigan, mills are supplied at 5s., with 15 per cent. discount; shops at 6s. to 7s. with none.

In Scotland, one of the Glasgow companies was wont to present its large customers with a bonus of 25 per cent. discount on a nominal charge of 6s. 8d., while the small were put off with 5; and the other companies made 6s. 8d. and 5s. the distinction between the two; but since 1846, both companies have begun to see the iniquity of even these comparatively moderate distinctions, and have resolved to charge 5s. from all,—a virtual acknowledgment that they have no just claim on the small consumers either for extra risk or additional expense.

There are reasons, it is said, for every thing, whether the reasons be good and sufficient, just and fair, or otherwise. We have already more than once gently hinted the main reason for the state of things revealed in the black list

just quoted from; but we need not rest in mere surmise while we have the means of solving the mystery *ipsisimis verbis* of some of the sagacious, but, perhaps, 'too truthful,' shareholding constituents of the gas companies themselves. At page 571 of the last volume of *THE BUILDER*, it is noted that "in consequence of the important and significant movement of certain manufacturing and other firms towards the manufacture of their own gas, the Lincoln Gas Company were again lately urged by some of their own shareholders to authorise a still further reduction of the price, as a boon to the consumer and a matter of policy to prevent private enterprise in the manufacture."

So! the secret is out! Wherever there is no chance of parties making their own gas, there put on the screw; but wherever there is some chance, on the contrary, there be reasonable. Meditate on this, ye "small consumers!" and take your measures, that is, adjust your meters, accordingly. Unless you can each of you provide yourself with what a sprightly contemporary, the *Gateshead Observer*, calls "Gas for one,"—Associate—Associate—have "Gas for all." If not by individual aggrandizement, still, by mutual adhesion, rise into the commanding attitude of the "large consumer." Then and only then may you expect to enjoy a share of those glorious 50 per cent. bonuses administered "as a matter of policy" to all who can bring the fear of "private enterprise" before the watchful eyes of the gasholder. Then, too, perhaps, as at Norwich and elsewhere, may even be added to the sterling bonus, the scarcely less acceptable award of a "large consumer's" share of the feasting *bolus*, all out of the superabundance even then still reaped and harvested out of your 'jolly green' pastures.

ANTIQUITIES OF NORWICH AND YARMOUTH.

THE NORFOLK ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

AT the twelfth annual meeting of this society, held on the 28th ult., Mr. Dawson Turner addressed the visitors at some length on the antiquities of the neighbourhood. He said, first, in regard to Yarmouth, it was well known that at no great distance of time, what was now the site of a town was entirely under water. They knew it by tradition, and by an old map of the town still in the possession of the corporation. They knew it, still further; by the construction of Burgh Castle. Yarmouth had nothing of great antiquity to offer. In reference to the restored church, it was only four weeks since that edifice was opened. The castle was formerly a remarkable building in the town, and the site of it was to be seen by reference to a map of the time of Queen Elizabeth, copied from one in the British Museum. That castle has been all swept away, and all they knew of it was that the site of it was in one of the rows still retaining the name of the Castle-row. Turning to the monasteries, they had the remains of six, including the lazar houses. Of these six the sites might now be traced, when they had an opportunity of doing it. One of them was situated between two rows; one called Quay Osten-row, and the other Dene Osten-row; so called from the supposed intercourse between Ostend and Yarmouth in former times; but in reality they derived the name from the St. Augustine, or St. Austin, friars having a monastery in that row, of which monastery little now remained, and it was used by that respectable body the Society of Friends. Turning then from the castle, and from monastic buildings, he came to houses of later date. Two of the time of Queen Elizabeth were of an interesting character. The most remarkable was that now occupied by Mr. Charles Palmer, respecting which he had published an elaborate and beautiful volume, shewing what domestic architecture was in the Elizabethan times. They had an interesting room in the Star Inn, known to have been inhabited by President Bradshaw. They had another house, lately occupied by the Rev. Henry Burroughs, whose absence everybody regretted. They had another room behind the Ballast Quay public-house, the ceiling of which was of the same date; and it was remarkable that it contained the Royal arms of England. Within four miles of the town there were two interesting buildings; he